

testimony as even medical politicians in the United States ; but it would be unjust to charge the German medical profession as a whole with venality and incapacity. The sooner the German alienists abandon this tone of patronizing criticism, the more dignified will their position become. There is a somewhat trite old proverb which is perfectly applicable to the present case : " Those who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

MISTAKEN ECONOMY IN THE TREATMENT OF THE INSANE.

IT is a matter of common observation that when hospitals for the insane are run on the " poor-house " plan, the patients suffer as the paupers, described in " Oliver Twist," did under the dietary prescribed by the " board.*" The English justices of the peace and their counterparts in America—the county and other local charity commissioners of the various States,—as a general rule, seem actuated by the most narrow ideas of economy, and, as a result, the condition of the insane in the county almshouses of many of the States is disgraceful to humanity. In Massachusetts, for example, long ere the era of Butler, the insane in the almshouses were starving and freezing in filthy dens, while millions were being spent on the palatial institution at Danvers. For a long time the hospital for the insane in the county in which Chicago is situated was run on a similar plan, and the patients were treated by *salaried* non-graduates in medicine appointed for purely political reasons. At last the profession of the city, stimulated by the movement of the New York Neurological Society, attempted the reform of these institutions, and as a result an able and conscientious superintendent was appointed, who reduced restraint, increased the privileges of the patients against ignorant, stupid, and venal opposition from his political superiors. Through his efforts provision was at length made for the utilization of the clinical facilities of the institution, and a special pathologist, Dr. S. V. Clevenger, was appointed. After years of incessant labor this superintendent, Dr. J. C. Spray, has succeeded in putting the institution on the proper basis as an *hospital* for the insane, and now it is proposed

to abolish the essential characters of the hospital and replace the superintendent by the almshouse authorities, who shall sway the insane as they do the paupers. The pathologist's position is also to be abolished, and all the measures taken to utilize the clinical advantages of the hospital are to be abandoned. From every standpoint such procedures, based purely on economical reasons, should be denounced. They are opposed to humanity, to the interests of science, and to ordinary foresight. It is to be hoped that the Cook County (Illinois) Commissioners will discern, from the public indignation with which their economical projects are greeted, the criminal absurdity of the proposed economical reforms.

Our neurological friends in Philadelphia have recently organized a "Neurological Society," with the following list of officers :

President, Dr. S. Weir Mitchell.

Vice-Presidents, Dr. Charles K. Mills, Dr. J. W. Kerlin.

Secretary and Treasurer, Dr. J. Hendric Lloyd.

Recorder, Dr. Lewis Brinton.

Council, Dr. Wharton Sinkler, Dr. L. Preston Jones, Dr. J. T. Eskridge.

Our New York Society of similar aims is chronologically ten years ahead of the Philadelphia organization—a superiority that it can never be deprived of, though one at the same time not to be proud of, except so far as to show that we here have long recognized the necessity of organized special work.

The new Society will give an impetus and an emphasis to that line of work in our neighboring city so long and so well represented by the name and fame of its new President, and so ably, industriously, and conscientiously pursued by its new Vice-President and fellow-officers. In other pages of the JOURNAL will be found the proceedings of the new society.

We extend to our fellow workers our heartiest wishes for success.